

successful national government, and it is time that the House and Senate understand that it is not worth one more life of our young men and women to stay in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, before I yield back the balance of my time, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I will ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I will ask God in his loving arms to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. And I will ask God to bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God, and God give strength, wisdom and courage to the President of the United States, Mr. Obama, that he will do what is right in the eyes of God. And three times I will close, God please, God please, God please bless America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO SERVICEMEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago when we sat down to turkey dinner with our families, we certainly had plenty to be thankful for. Our thoughts, however, were thinking about the men and women of the Armed Forces, both active duty and retired, who have risked life and limb for all of us, and these folks, these troops, were in our prayers of thanks and in our hopes.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is critical that our gratitude to these courageous Americans be expressed not just with kind thoughts around the Thanksgiving table or speeches on Veterans Day. We need to show our thanks with deeds, not words, which is why it was important last week that the House passed the Physician Payment and Therapy Relief Act, ensuring that seniors and military families continue to see their doctors.

But even as we were taking that important step, military health benefits continue to be endangered, because Defense Secretary Gates is considering a proposal to increase the amount that military retirees pay for their health insurance under the TRICARE program.

Let me be clear: I couldn't agree more with Mr. Gates's belief that the Pentagon is overextended. I share his concern about the "gusher of defense spending," as he himself refers to it. If we are having a serious conversation about the bloated DOD budget, then I

am all in. In fact, the Congressional Progressive Caucus has proposed \$600 billion in cuts, much of it from obsolete, overpriced and untested weapons systems that are doing absolutely nothing to protect America or advance our national security interests.

But with so much waste, fraud and abuse, why in the world would we cut the Pentagon budget by taking it out of the hide of the military families who have already sacrificed so very much? Why should they take the hit, while DOD has historically shown little spending discipline or fiscal responsibility, throwing billions upon billions of dollars at inefficient programs? Instead of targeting affordable health care for the people who have worn the uniform, how about we start by pulling the plug on the V-22 Osprey, notoriously over budget and also responsible for 30 accidental deaths over the years?

Norbert Ryan, Jr., of the Military Officers Association of America, put it well to The New York Times. He wrote: "Don't ask the folks who have done so much for this country, who have been called to act since 9/11, to be first in line to give some more."

It is indeed true, Mr. Speaker, that military retirees and their families get a good benefits package. To those who say they should pay more, I say they have already worked for a higher premium in the form of their service and sacrifice than any of us can even imagine. The bottom line is that military retirees have earned the benefits they receive. They deserve them. We owe it to them. It is a promise we must keep to them.

But let me take this argument one step further, Mr. Speaker. I have got a broader solution that attacks the problem two different ways. First, ending the war in Afghanistan will cut military spending dramatically, and it will also mean fewer military retirees requiring fewer health care services, yet another urgent, compelling reason to bring our troops home.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### LYING IS NOT PATRIOTIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, WikiLeaks' release of classified information has generated a lot of attention worldwide in the past few weeks. The hysterical reaction makes one wonder if this is not an example of killing the messenger for the bad news.

Despite what is claimed, information so far released, though classified, has

caused no known harm to any individual but it has caused plenty of embarrassment to our government. Losing a grip on our empire is not welcomed by the neoconservatives in charge.

There is now more information confirming that Saudi Arabia is a principal supporter and financier of al Qaeda, and this should set off alarm bells since we guarantee its sharia-run government. This emphasizes even more the fact that no al Qaeda existed in Iraq before 9/11, and yet we went to war against Iraq based on the lie that it did.

It has been discharged by self-proclaimed experts that Julian Assange, the Internet publisher of this information, has committed a heinous crime, deserving prosecution for treason, and execution or even assassination.

But should we not at least ask how the U.S. Government can charge an Australian citizen with treason for publishing U.S. secret information that he did not steal? And if WikiLeaks is to be prosecuted for publishing classified documents, why shouldn't the Washington Post, the New York Times, and others that have also published these documents be prosecuted? Actually, some in Congress are threatening this as well.

The New York Times, as a result of a Supreme Court ruling, was not found guilty in 1971 for the publication of the Pentagon Papers. Daniel Ellsberg never served a day in prison for his role in obtaining these secret documents.

The Pentagon Papers were also inserted into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD by Senator Mike Gravel with no charges being made of breaking any national security laws. Yet the release of this classified information was considered illegal by many, and those who lied us into the Vietnam War and argued for its prolongation were outraged. But the truth gained from the Pentagon Papers revealed that lies were told about the Gulf of Tonkin attack, which perpetuated a sad and tragic episode in our history.

Just as with the Vietnam War, the Iraq war was based on lies. We were never threatened by weapons of mass destruction or al Qaeda in Iraq, though the attack on Iraq was based on this false information.

Any information that challenges the official propaganda for the war in the Middle East is unwelcome by the administration and supporters of these unnecessary wars.

Few are interested in understanding the relationship of our foreign policy and our presence in the Middle East to the threat of terrorism. Revealing the real nature and goal of our presence in so many Muslim countries is a threat to our empire, and any revelation of this truth is highly resented by those in charge.

Questions to consider:

No. 1, do the American people deserve to know the truth regarding the ongoing war in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Yemen?